2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

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MY KITE MASCOT
(Japanese)

[P. 104 (A)]

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

CHAPTER XV

ABOUT MASCOTS

When writing about "That Wicked Missionary" a good Japanese friend sent me a sort of mascot, concerning which I wish to say a few words. I am not fully sure that the term "mascot" quite fits the object, but anyway it will serve my purpose here as well as "talisman," "charm" or what not.

During the late World War and ever since one has heard much of mascots. They are now in vogue everywhere in Europe and appear to have come there to stay. I believe they are kept "for luck," and bespeak a certain amount of superstition. At least, such is the impression I have got about them. I am assured that the Ainu also have had mascots of various kinds from time immemorial, and what we find them using today are but fetishes or relics of the same.

As these people sit at their feasts or when they perform any function or ceremony of importance, the men may be seen wearing crowns of two kinds. Those the younger of them wear are called *inauru*, i.e. "filament fetish," and those the more important men don are called *ekashpa-umbe*, i.e. "things crowning the elders." They are all made of long shavings and strips of bark and cloth. But on the front of those the elders wear are to be seen carved images of such things as bears, wolves, foxes, kites, eagles, jays, sparrows and other creatures, while on their moustache-lifters, which they use to hold their moustaches out of whatever they may be drinking, are to be found representations of various marine animals and fishes. These

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

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527 may possible have been originally clan or totemistic
293 signs.

Among the Ainu all the objects so represented are
264 first worshipped and then killed and eaten. Some of
782 the flesh is eaten raw and the warm blood drunk.
771 There seems to be some special virtue attached to drinking a little of the blood, which is caught in a vessel when the animal or bird is killed at the feast. Indeed, so much is thought of this that whenever the Ainu send me by post, as they sometimes do, a portion of bruin's flesh after he has been sacrificed, some of the blood is invariably sprinkled on the inside wrapping. The meat is always nicely wrapped up in sacred fetish shavings as well. No doubt the flesh is good but I can never bring myself to touch it. I thank them for their kind thought.

In my very early days here it was no uncommon thing for me to see such living creatures as I have mentioned, even poor little sparrows, kept in cages to be used in sacrifice at the proper season. By eating such, the peculiar powers and special virtues of each were supposed to pass into the communicant. To keep one of these in a cage was to be sure of great good luck, only the creature must be very carefully attended to or evil would, it was supposed, befall its owner.

766 On a certain occasion it was necessary for me to pass
782 through a village where there was a great and mighty wailing for the dead going on, accompanied by a noisy bacchanalian feast. The whole village was mourning and many had come in from miles around to assist, each bringing dumplings or *saké*. "What is the matter?" I asked. "Oh, the little cub has died," was the reply. It was a death feast, for the "dear little mighty one" had died. Its flesh was not to be eaten as it would have been had it been properly killed, but its head would be set up on high at the fetish place as a relic to be gazed upon and worshipped. A very elaborate funeral was being given it. Its spirit must be thus mollified

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

and propitiated. It must be sent away with much *sake* and many dumplings (made of millet and rice, in this instance) and so be persuaded to give its ancestors a good account of its treatment while upon earth. And in the other world, taking the essence of the viands then offered, it was to make another feast for those gone before. Thus, then, the village mascot had died, and yet it lived. And now for the story of my present.

A short time ago a Japanese farmer, 60 years of age, came with a friend and asked if I would try to take away a big hard lump he had growing over his ribs, for he did not like to undergo the operation his doctor proposed. He was afraid he would not get over it. My treatment was successful, so that happily he was soon quite himself again. And he was very much rejoiced. Shortly afterwards he sent me by a friend a beautifully carved kite which he had done himself. It was a thank-offering to me for what I had done for him. I thought it was a very quaint gift, and made inquiries as to what it meant. I was informed that the farmers of his district often made these things for themselves and special friends as talismans. To keep such would be sure to bring good luck. And so my farmer thus wished me happiness and prosperity. This is how I came by my mascot.

It will be remembered, no doubt, that just as Admiral Togo was about to attack the Russian fleet in the 38th year of Meiji, a hawk came and settled on his flagship. This was taken as a great good omen and sent a thrill of joy and confidence not only throughout the navy and army but through the hearts and homes of the people of the whole Empire. I was here in Sapporo at the time and saw the result. The incident braced the people with courage, strengthened their will, and inspired them with assured faith and hope. We know what the result was. The enemy fleet was sunk. With this incident in mind I can well understand the old man's meaning.

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924) 1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

114 It is said that "confession is good for the soul," so I conclude this account with one of my own. In spite of all our boasted spirituality how prone the human mind is to materialism! How strongly ideas of childhood's days have fastened themselves on one's soul! I quite thought I had altogether outgrown gross materialism, yet, when that mascot—that carved kite—was handed to me, for a moment, I felt with regard to it as I used to do respecting the old lucky-stone and penny-with-the-hole-in-it which I used to carry about in my pocket when I was quite a small boy! Well, my old friend wished me prosperity by his gift and I take off my hat to him. He came to see me but two days ago and told me with great joy that he remains entirely well. I am glad to say he is looking happy and in peace.

● 777 431 But a quite different kind of charm was given me by a good Ainu friend in my young days. We were about the same age, and he and I were very fast friends and did a good deal of hunting together when we needed food. His present consisted in a small knife in a sheath which he himself had carved very nicely for me. He brought it to me with a letter, a translation of which I now give. He told me that the sheath would bring me good luck.

My Dear Friend,

I present you with this knife-sheath. When henceforth, Sir, you go to hunt among the mountains, gird yourself with it. When you see a hare or duck, kill them with this knife. I now write to you about knife-sheaths. Consider.

[41]

A KNIFE AND SHEATH

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

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When a couple are newly married, the first thing the man does is to make a knife-sheath which he gives to the woman; and the wife works a head-dress, as it is called, and presents it to her husband. It is a very good thing to follow this custom. For the old men say that husbands and wives ought to do so. And so I have made a sheath, which I present to you, sir. I have now told you in writing why the knife-sheath should be in one's possession.

That is all, and in it we have another link with 777
and echo from the past.

It should not be thought from this, however, that I was actually to kill the quarry with this little knife. Rather, I was given to understand that the special [411
virtues and powers believed to be inherent in it would 234]
be transferred to my person when out hunting, if I would carry it.

I suppose I ought to consider myself fortunate to have received two such charms. Though I have no faith in them or any such things, I am very thankful to have the good will and best wishes they imply of my two good friends, one Japanese and the other Ainu.

When writing about my Kite Mascot I referred to 200
a great and solemn mourning I witnessed for a little bear cub which had unfortunately died while being brought up for a festival in a certain village. Many years before this happened, I received a short prayer from an Ainu hunter which he said was used by some people when praying to cubs at the time of being sacrificed. This prayer is so unexpectedly peculiar 527
that I now write a translation of it. (There is really 774
nothing new under the sun, psychically speaking, for I find ideas about the dense material and the astral bodies believed in by modern theosophists, who suppose the discarnate spirits of man and beast to live in the astral world. There they appear as the real beings, while we on the earth are but shadows.) In order that the prayer may be the better understood, I have divid-

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

CHAPTER XXII

HUT BUILDING AND DEDICATION

"When the first hut came down from Heaven," so runs the tradition, "it descended with the Goddess of Fire and was called 'The room in which the Divine Nourisher is placed,' 'The room sent down,' and 'The room God made.'" And I will here add that the word I have translated by "room" also means "womb," and to the folk-lorest this will perhaps be significant. The foregoing is not a long tradition, indeed, but is very much to the point, and is quite unexpected.

The native hut is certainly not much to look at from the outside, built as it is simply with a few posts, beams, poles and reeds, nor could I ever discover anything very heavenly about it from the inside. Regarded from an Ainu point of view, however, it is a very sacred thing indeed, for it is looked upon by them as an actual living creature having a conscious, personal identity. While being set up, every part of it has the sacred willow fetish shavings placed upon it or suspended from it. They are put in every joint, about the beams, on the top of the uprights, along the rafters and by the windows and doors. No part is forgotten. These things are called the "heart" or "pulse" of the house. It is believed that when the building ceases to exist in this world, it goes back to Heaven for the use of the former inhabitants, ready for them when they arrive there. Thus the material itself is looked upon as the shadow only, while the living spirit is the real substance.

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

alive in the spirit kingdom and carry their names with them. Should the name of a departed one be applied to a boy or girl in our world, it would grieve the soul of the dead one and call forth displeasure. Some sickness or other evil would be sure to follow, for the spirits of the dead can and do act upon the living for good or ill, when they have a mind to do so. For this reason, no person may take the name of a deceased parent, friend or ancestor.

"Names," continued my friend, "are lucky or unlucky as the case may be. They bring good fortune if rightly applied, and ill fortune if bestowed wrongly. In themselves, names are living beings, and, like the persons to whom they are given, they have separate personal identities and must therefore be treated with due respect." This is a wonderful doctrine which I found fully believed in.

A sickly young girl came to me one day and asked if I would kindly change her name. "But what is the matter with your name? Why do you wish me to change it?" I asked. The poor thing replied, "I am always ailing and I believe it is because my name does not fit me." And with a big sigh she added, "Please take it off me and bestow on me another." I thereupon told her that her name was changed from that moment into Reishipi, and this means, in Ainu, "a changed name." She at once imagined herself much better and went away fully satisfied. The new name evidently fitted her, for she soon got married and brought up a family afterwards.

Penri, continuing his instructions, added, "One must be very careful not to give a child the name of any other person, for a name can only rightly belong to one individual. If several persons were called by the same name, it would confuse gods and demons alike, as well as people here and those gone before. The gods would bless or curse the wrong persons, and the demons would not know for certain which party

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

2. if the patient died, the image
was left severely alone or cast away without ceremony 754
toward the west, which according to Ainu ideas is the 823
abode of darkness and the region whence all troubles
come.

I asked my friend how it happened that the Ainu 825
called snakes divine, when they acknowledged them
to be demons. "Ah," he said, "we only pretend to
worship them. We only flatter them and make them
imagine we look upon them as gods." These are his
words: "Snakes are very quick-tempered, but are easily
deceived by adulation. And so it happens that when
a child is born, the image of one of those reptiles is
made and worshipped by way of flattery. It is not
really worshipped, it is all a make-believe. And, should
a woman be possessed by a demon snake, she becomes
a hardened witch doctor and very dangerous. She will
also make images of snakes to worship."

Further; "As regards these creatures:—should a
woman see a snake swallowing anything, it means
snake possession for her. In such a case the creature
must be certainly killed and a stick stuck through its
head." One may often come across snake skins in the
early summer, left where they have been shed. It is
regarded as unlucky to see these, for they bring curses. [777]
Should a person see one, he must expectorate and say,
"The coward was running away." But if one sees the
skeleton of one lying curled up, he must say, "What a
brave one! He was not afraid to die by fire."

2: Batchelor M-5 (1877-1924)1927
AB6 Ainu AB6

having a notch cut in the top of it, which he said was the "mouth." On the mouth of each was laid some kind of stuff which had a very disagreeable smell. Some had putrified fish, some a lump of garlic, others scrapings of albatross bill, some powdered deer horn and some a little bear's gall on them.

I ventured to ask my friend the meaning of all these things, and he told me they were set about as a defence against the fearful demons of epidemic disease who were then stalking about Ainu-land. He said that the sticks were representations of eagles, hawks and owls who held the putrified, smelly matter in their bills and so fought against the demons on behalf of the people. The strips cut downwards on the sticks represented the feathers of the birds, who were standing there in great wrath, ready to attack and slay any demon which should dare to appear. The killing was done by the filthy smell, for no demon would be able to endure it. Should he inhale any of it, the effect would be death.

Upon asking why elder sticks were used in preference to the usual willow, this drew forth the following piece of lore.

"Elder and not willow wood is used in making this kind of fetish, because this is an unlucky tree and poisonous. Being so, it is greatly hated by the demons of disease. If such a demon comes anywhere near it, he quickly dies. These kinds of fetishes are sometimes called 'Thick Club.' This is because they knock the demons on the head when they appear, and so slay them outright." Then my friend added, "Posts of elder are used by some to mark the graves of children, for, being brittle, this wood soon breaks, and so is a fitting symbol of a short, snapped-off life. The bigger branches are used for carrying corpses to their graves, and when done with are left there to rot."

4: Landor T-5 (ca. 1890) 1893 AB6 Ainu AB6

sizes and shapes impressed me as being mostly for ornament. Then some are held as charms against misfortune and disease; but they never impressed me as being offerings to the gods. *Inao* are placed near springs, so that the good water may not turn into pestilential, and occasionally *inao* of a peculiar shape are hung in the doorway of newly-built huts. They are made of a number of small willow sticks tied together, from which hang five or six bunches of shavings; they are hung horizontally, and not in a vertical position, like the other *inao*. They are very uncommon, and only used on certain specified occasions. For example, when a child is born an *inao*, in the shape of a doll, is made of a bunch of reeds folded double and tied with a string about an inch from the bend, which thus forms the head; it is then tied lower down to indicate the waist. By dividing the reeds into two equal portions they produce a pair of legs, and a stick is then passed through the reeds between the head and the waist to form the arms. When this doll is made it is placed near the infant, so that should any disease or misfortune, in the shape of a kind of evil spirit, be tempted to enter the child's body, it may be averted, and enter the doll instead. Should a person fall ill new *inao* are stuck in the hearth, as the Ainu share our own idea that evil spirits dwell mostly in fire; others are placed near the sick person. They are not meant as offerings to the gods for his or her quick recovery, but merely to bring good luck to the individual whose body they think has been taken possession of by "animals inside," or, in other words, evil spirits.

Even at the present day in England and on the Continent horseshoes for luck are hung over entrance doors, and if a horseshoe be fastened on to a stable-door, the beasts within are supposed to be held free from accidents and illness.

In Spain and Italy little red rags tied to a small wand, not dissimilar in shape to a small Ainu *inao*, are stuck in flower-pots near windows, over beds, doors, and up chimneys, to keep witches at bay, red being a powerful exorcist in the way of colours, and as good as the "running stream which witches dare not cross." Some hysterical women have declared that they have seen witches hiding in the smoke of the boiling *Pentola* (the earthenware pot in which the soup is boiled)—but that on seeing the red rags they vanished, and never

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HEARTH AND HOME

workmanship, real achievements when one considers that they were knife-worked.

The *ikoro* have a value which at first sight seems fantastic. Objects that look like toy swords and imitation quivers, often strips and tablets of wood, pass for precious things. Among them, it is true, are iron swords, of which every man is supposed to possess at least one. The scabbards are often profusely decorated, some with Ainu and others with Japanese carving, and some have metal fittings. These swords are kept for ceremonial use. They are brandished in the processional dance to drive away evil spirits, which is held when there has been a death by drowning or other fatal accident, or when a house has been burnt down. They are also used in exorcisms for disease and in mimetic and other dances. They are credited with great potency, and by some elders are regarded as *kamui*. Both they and the imitation swords usually have a broad sash attached wherewith they are hung over the shoulder.

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Imitation swords have either a solid scabbard or a short wooden blade. They are often adorned with small patches of tinsel or foil. Many of the sword and quiver *ikoro* are old, and age adds value even to articles of poor quality. They are believed to intensify luck in hunting, whereby more *ikoro* are obtained by barter of skins. This luck waned if they were seen by others, though the owner could gloat over them without much risk. Hence the most precious, *ikoro ikeu*, were also known as *mokoro* (sleeping) *ikoro*. Various reasons for this secrecy are alleged, such as fear of envy and dislike of ostentation, but ideas of magic are probably strong. In legends, the possessor of many *ikoro* adorned with tinsel was a *nishpa* (from *nish*, sky, and *pa*, above, chief). Imitation quivers had designs of sun, moon and stars carved or inlaid, and were then called *tombe*, shining things. The quiver, by the way, was feminine.

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No. 12 on the plan of the house indicates the place for clothes and things under feminine control, including some things prepared for the dead. The husband and wife sleep at 13 and the children at 14. At G is the southern shining window (*itom puyara*), and at H the small window (*pon puyara*), near which dishes and other things are washed. Everyone has a bowl for personal use, and it is customary to clean it with the index finger, which is called the bowl-licking finger (*itangi-kem-ashki-pet*) or, for short, licking-thing (*kembe*).

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Most of the southern part of the room was unoccupied except by

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
AB6 Ainu AB6

342 527 782 554 from that which follows the worship of the other gods and the ceremony of Falling Tears.

A sacred tradition runs—'*Anomi kamui inne [illegible] uko kiyanne, uko iresu*, Kamui Fuchi, Nusa-koro Kamui, Chise-koro Kamui *ne ruwe ne*', which means—'However numerous the worshipped *kamui*, together most capable, together most sustaining [maintaining] are those three.' There is no doubt that they form a group bound together not only by co-related ritual but by their intimate association in safeguarding the house and promoting the welfare of its inmates.

342 527 778 782 Offerings of beer are made and prayers said to all the *kamui* who have *nusa* along the *inau* fence. The purport of all the prayers is similar—for safety, offspring, health and good fortune—and before each prayer the recipient is addressed by flattering titles. Each rite ends with the throwing of a handful of lees as a sop to any evil spirits who may be hanging round. In the offerings to Hash-inau-uk Kamui the winged variety of libation wand is used, and this wand is not taken back through the sacred window but is tied to a strand of the embodied *inau*.[1] Some beer is left in the cup after she has had her drop and the elder his swig. An ordinary libation wand is substituted for the winged one, and young men may take a sip. This is for luck or for help from the *kamui* when hunting. [777] Prayer is made to Wakka-ush Kamui under his name of Pet-orun Kamui, and to his female counterpart Nai-orun Kamui. The offering to the latter is not made at the *inau* fence of Wakka-ush Kamui, but at a special *nusa* of four small-winged *inau* and one *inau* with a body and twisted shavings which is set up near water. Should the water be at a distance the rite is performed by a younger man. It must be performed before the full ritual salutations are given and [184] the Falling Tears ceremony performed. In the Nibutani district five *kamui* receive beer and one twisted shaven *inau* each before the ritual salutation, and here and elsewhere special worship is given to the eagle-owl, which receives a twisted shaven *inau*, libations and prayers at the fence of plenteous *inau* (text fig. 1, D).

776 782 184 A purely local *kamui*, known as the Kamui of Nai-oput (a neighbouring valley) is interesting because he is said to be the spirit ruler of Imosh Kamui (Pl. VII, fig. 7). He also receives offerings

778 [1] A similar one is used in the ceremony for Metot-ush Kamui in the ritual dismissal of the Bear.—N.G.M.

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
AB6 Ainu AB6

753 755 825 158 [778] [787] [791]

the tail to sweep her body and purify it.[1] (See Pl. XXI, fig. 3.) It would seem that the rite has a genuinely cathartic effect, and I learnt from various elders that improvement usually took place after a few days or even a few hours. A sick woman may ask the elder for *tusu* rather than for *imu* treatment. In the *tusu* state the patient becomes possessed by the snake spirit of Kinashut Kamui. The elder consults the *kamui* before acceding to this request, and if the *kamui* approves the woman may become a medium (*tusu*).[2]

There is yet another means of curing the ailments attributed to possession by snakes, whereby a woman becomes a helper or nurse (*ikoinkara guru*), and thereby both relieves a complex and gains esteem. I am told that only women of specially good character are eligible; they become midwives, and though untrained are a great help to women in labour. The ceremonies are much like those of *imu* conversion.

755 776 825

There is one more exorcism, and this is interesting on account not only of the means employed but of the remarkable nature of the *kamui* concerned, which is a hornet. While the ordinary wasp is thought to be vicious and quick to sting, the hornet (*shisoya*) is said to be tolerant, never stinging unless provoked, but terrible when its wrath is aroused. Even horses and bears which have disturbed a nest are said to have been killed. Yet it is believed to be lucky to have a nest in the house, and that the inmates are never stung.

[777]

In this district and others in the south the hornet shares, though in much lesser degree, the repute of Kinashut Kamui as a spirit helper, but sometimes its *ramat*, indignant at being assaulted and losing its body, takes possession of somebody and causes sickness. This is said to be cured readily, for the hornet is amenable to the proper mode of exorcism. The following is an outline of its peculiar features, it being understood that, as in all these rituals, the approval of the important *kamui* must first be sought.

[753]

A backward-shaven *inau* is set up at the chaff-thrown *nusa*, then a model of a hornet's nest, called *shisoya chisei*, is made of sacred shavings with two curled shavings attached, and this is hung on the *inau* to absorb virtue. After this, switches for purification are made of curled shavings, and lastly some grain, rice or millet is laid at the *nusa* ready for use. I was told that the grain is a token

[778] [783]

[1] For other forms of sickness and in the case of epidemics the snake effigy is woven from grass and its tail is used as a brush for purification.—N.G.M.

[2] See Appendix, p. 163.

7:Munro & Seligman D. E-4. 5 (ca. 1900-1942) 1963
AB6 Ainu AB6

pliments, assurances and libations. Then skinning and dividing the body proceed according to strict rules of traditional ritual. The Ainu reverently drink the blood of the bear, calling it divine medicine. 796 825 782

Cushioned on the skin, with body removed, the head of the bear is believed still to attract the lingering spirit. Gestures of gratitude are made and praise and libations are offered, while the sacred fire burns at the place of the rendezvous to which it is hoped will come the World Spirit of the Ainu, the 'Holder of Space' and source of all life on earth. Here are placed the cups that had held the blood. During the feast etiquette forbids one who receives the cup just filled to drink it. He makes the gesture of reverence and passes it to the person opposite. An offering is also made to the ancestors. The women, too, make offerings to their matrilineal forebears (see Ch. VIII, Shinurapa). [576]

After this reverent ritual, the people enjoy themselves. Small millet balls are thrown and scrambled for because they bring luck through intimate association with the bear *kamui*. School children play at tug of war. The women dance at the place of the Great Offering. The spirits and gods are present as auspicious guests, and everything must be done to please and entertain them. Ceremonial swords are carried to guard against evil spirits. [777] ●

The final feast is held in the large house. Near the sacred East window lies the head of the bear with its lingering soul as chief guest of the feast. Food is set in front of it so that virtue may be acquired and passed on to those who eat it. 574 796 825

Then the 'sacred flesh' is distributed. The Wine-Controller, who sits beside the head of the god and opposite the large vessel of liquor, is a responsible official who gets a goodly portion. Ordinary guests receive small pieces of food, reverently taken in both hands. The feast includes millet beer and soon the Elders and guests begin to feel its effect. Then men dance, and after a while the women join in. [535]

/771/

845 the Kuril Islands. But I have the following reasons for main-
847 taining that even today the Ainu are in the habit of killing their twins.

1. Their conviction that of twins always only one remains alive, namely that one, which is of human descent. The deceased twin is of devilish origin.

2. The Ainu family's fear of bringing up the child descended from the Evil One and the continuing disgrace of the mother in the view of her acquaintances. This feeling of disgrace is so
[124] strong that I had extraordinary difficulty in obtaining any kind of information about the mothers who had borne twins. Only such people who were in no wise related to their families or who even felt hostile to them, dared to point them out to me.

3. Finally the circumstance that during my stay among the Ainu not a single living pair of twins was to be found, although I managed to obtain information about two grown-up women of whom both, as sole survivors, belonged to different pairs of twins. In 1902 a woman in a village known to me recovered from the birth of twins which, however, died immediately.

These grounds for believing that even today the Ainu kill one of the twins could at most be weakened by a single tradition on this topic. I was told that twin brothers who remained
[177] alive and whose parents succeeded in bring them up, were favorites of fortune and particularly capable in hunting. It is
[177] however possible that this tradition is of Japanese and in fact later origin, since it was unknown to many. Others maintained, for instance, that among the Ainu, as among the Japanese, only the younger brother is courageous, strong and happy. The older is, they say, in no respect different from the average member of his tribe.

845 The Ainu, like the Gilyak, try equally hard to protect
782 themselves from the repetition of such a misfortune by sacrifices
778 and prayers. In the south of Sakhalin Island for instance, they
184 hang, in honor of the gods and spirits, the usual sacrificial
789 object, the intricately carved stick (inau), over the bed of a
[191] mother of twins. In the northern villages they attach, apart

/773 cont./

841 846 [853] [833] After childbirth Ainu usually have no menses for a long time since for an extended period they nurse their children themselves. But if /774/ a woman is not moderate in her sexual relations she will have menses after five months even if she nurses her child herself.

841 292 [439] During menstruation Ainu women wear woven aprons which they buy either from the Japanese or the Russians. In former years they used aprons of seal-skin for this purpose. These aprons are tied round the nude body, not in front, but in the back. In sitting position the blood drips onto the apron and thus protects the clothing from spots. Sometimes it happens that the blood drips onto the floor of the yurt or of the yard when the woman walks about, since Ainu women do not wear any kind of pants. I myself have repeatedly seen such stains, although the women seek to avoid as much as possible such an occurrence which they consider indecent.

841 777 789 Here one can see again the great difference between the Ainu and the Gilyak in the relation of the family to women, which I indicated earlier in describing childbirth among these tribes. The Ainu consider it harmless to look at the blood of a woman or even to tread on a blood spot. In fact the blood of menstruation is even considered a good talisman. If someone sees a drop of blood on the floor he should wipe it off with his finger and smear his chest with it. It is an excellent expedient that can help everyone to wealth since it exercises a favorable influence in financial matters. The blood of the woman on the chest of the man becomes a talisman which brings it about that all those who deal with him in financial affairs have to give in to him, so that he derives great advantage from it. Whoever should get to see an apron used during menstruation, which actually can happen only very rarely, since the woman carefully hide these aprons from the eyes of all, but especially of the men, should ask its owner to give him a small piece of it. This he should always carry with him since it is considered a powerful talisman in the struggle of existence.

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841 204 777 789 755 Men who undertake long hunting expeditions almost always have a piece of such an apron with them, which also serves as a remedy for pains. In the latter case they moisten it and rub the sick spot with it.

562 All this points to the fact that among the Ainu there are still strong traces of the times when the woman played the principal part in the life of the family and of the man.